



CITY OF CARLSBAD

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Office of the Chief of Police

NEWS FROM THE CITY OF CARLSBAD POLICE DEPARTMENT

For immediate release

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City cracking down on illegal red light preemptors

CARLSBAD, Calif. – The City of Carlsbad is better able to detect the illegal use of equipment that turns red lights to green, thanks to new traffic signal technology the city is using to improve traffic flow.

According to City of Carlsbad Traffic Engineer Bryan Jones, "The signal preemption sensor is only legally used by the Fire Department during an emergency response, changing the lights to green and speeding a lifesaving response."

Misuse of the sensor changes the normal cycle of the traffic signal and can disrupt traffic flow for six to eight minutes, causing traffic to back up unnecessarily, added Jones.

Two weeks ago the city transportation staff contacted the Police Department when the city's new Traffic Management Center registered an irregularity with traffic signals. After an investigation traffic engineers found motorists appeared to be using signal preemption devices to change the signals.

The city's new Traffic Management Center is a computerized traffic signal system that includes cameras to detect cars at intersections. When needed, traffic engineers can use the cameras to watch how vehicles are triggering the sensors and how well a signal is servicing an intersection.

On March 27, traffic engineers and police officers responded to a traffic signal on Armada Drive and detained a driver who was found to be using an "emergency vehicle preemptor." As a result the motorist was cited for the illegal possession and use of the device, and the preemptor and associated parts were impounded. According to section 21464(e) of the California Vehicle Code, the fine for such an offense starts at \$2,000.

"Anyone thinking of using these devices should know that with this new technology, we can track you, and the Police Department will be enforcing this law," said City of Carlsbad Police Corporal Robert Shelton.

For more information

Bryan Jones, City of Carlsbad traffic engineer, 760-602-2431 or Bryan.jones@carlsbadca.gov
Carlsbad Police Corporal Robert Shelton, 760-931-2284 or Robert.shelton@carlsbadca.gov

Police media contact

Jodee Sasway, Public Information Officer, 760-931-2105 or Jodee.sasway@carlsbadca.gov

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